

plays to our strengths for the reasons Ambassador Hills has already mentioned. We know that our pharmaceutical and computer software firms can harness America's brainpower and now put it to work all over the world. We know our tractors can plow the soil of every nation. We know that from cars to computers, from furniture to frozen foods, we can still make the things the world wants to buy, and when GATT is fully implemented, we'll be selling those things everywhere in the world.

The GATT passed the House Ways and Means Committee by 35 to 3, the Senate Finance Committee by 19 to 0; has a phenomenal amount of support from business, consumer,

labor groups, over 400 economists. But the point I want to make is, we need to do it now. Secretary Bentsen has estimated that even a 6-month delay will cost our economy up to \$70 billion in extra economic growth over the decade, a 6-month delay.

So we are here today to say: The work has been done. The path to the future is clear. Our obligations are plain. We thank all of you for your support, and let's do it now and do it this year.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:14 p.m. at the West Wing Portico of the White House.

## Statement on the Resignation of Mike Espy as Secretary of Agriculture *October 3, 1994*

I have accepted with regret Secretary Mike Espy's offer to resign effective December 31, 1994. This decision will permit me to name a successor efficiently. It will facilitate the work of the Department, and it will enable Secretary Espy to leave his post with an outstanding record of accomplishment that will outlast the uncertainty that exists today.

Secretary Espy has been a relentless champion for American farmers and consumers. Because of his leadership, legislation enabling USDA to reinvent its management and modernize the services it provides farmers and farm communities is nearing completion in Congress. When lives and livelihoods were threatened by natural disasters in rural communities, Mike Espy was our steward for relief efforts. As Agriculture Secretary, he was an advocate for ensuring that people who were hungry in an abundant

America were fed by the food we grow here. He fought for agriculture exports, the environment, and for a Department that was service-friendly to farmers and taxpayers. In these duties and others, he served well.

Over the last few weeks, however, the Office of the White House Counsel has reviewed information about Secretary Espy and the actions he took while in office. Although Secretary Espy has said he has done nothing wrong, I am troubled by the appearance of some of these incidents and believe his decision to leave is appropriate. During the remainder of his tenure, Secretary Espy will recuse himself from meat and poultry inspection issues. And I have asked Judge Abner Mikva, the White House Counsel, to continue his review of the Espy case until that review is complete.

## Message to the Congress Reporting on the Unblocking of Panamanian Government Assets *October 3, 1994*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

1. I hereby report to the Congress on developments since the last Presidential report on November 9, 1993, which have resulted in the

termination of the continued blocking of Panamanian government assets. This is the final report with respect to Panama pursuant to section

207(d) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1706(d).

2. On April 5, 1990, President Bush issued Executive Order No. 12710, terminating the national emergency declared on April 8, 1988, with respect to Panama. While this order terminated the sanctions imposed pursuant to that declaration, the blocking of Panamanian government assets in the United States was continued in order to permit completion of the orderly unblocking and transfer of funds that the President directed on December 20, 1989, and to foster the resolution of claims of U.S. creditors involving Panama, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1706(a). The termination of the national emergency did not affect the continuation of compliance audits and enforcement actions with respect to activities taking place during the sanctions period, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(a).

3. The Panamanian Transactions Regulations, 31 CFR Part 565 (the "Regulations"), were amended effective May 9, 1994, to foster the resolution of U.S. persons' claims against the Government of Panama arising prior to the April 5, 1990, termination date. (59 *Federal Register* 24643, May 12, 1994.) A copy of the amendment is attached. The amendment, new section 565.512, includes a statement of licensing policy indicating that the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control ("FAC") would issue specific licenses authorizing the release of blocked Government of Panama funds at the request of that government to satisfy settlements, final judgments, and arbitral awards with respect to claims of U.S. persons arising prior to April 5, 1990. In addition, FAC stated that it would accept license applications from U.S. persons seeking judicial orders of attachment against blocked Government of Panama assets in satisfaction of final judgments entered against the Government of Panama, provided such applications are submitted no later than June 15, 1994.

4. No applications were received pursuant to this amendment for the purpose of obtaining judicial orders of attachment against blocked Government of Panama assets. Since the last report, however, specific licenses were issued at the request of the Government of Panama to unblock about \$4.4 million to satisfy settlements reached with the vast majority of U.S. creditors by the Government of Panama. On September 9, 1994, the FAC gave notice to the public that the remaining blocked Govern-

ment of Panama assets, approximately \$2.1 million, would be unblocked effective September 16, 1994. (50 *Federal Register* 46720, September 9, 1994.) A copy of the notice is attached. Half of the \$2.1 million had been held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York at the request of the Government of Panama. The remaining amounts were held in blocked commercial bank accounts or in blocked reserved accounts established under section 565.509 of the Panamanian Transactions Regulations, 31 CFR 565.509. The remaining known claimants were informed that, prior to the unblocking, the Government of Panama and Air Panama had directed the transfer of \$400,000 into a trust account administered by counsel to the Republic of Panama and Air Panama, as escrow agent, to be utilized toward resolution of the few remaining U.S. claims. This sum exceeds the face amount of the total of the known remaining claims.

5. With the unblocking on September 16, 1994, of Government of Panama funds that had been subject to the continued blocking, the sanctions program initiated to deal with the threat once posed by the Noriega regime in Panama is completed. However, enforcement action for past violations may still be pursued within the applicable statute of limitations.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government during the period of the national emergency with respect to Panama from April 8, 1988, through April 5, 1990, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Panama are estimated to total about \$2.225 million, most of which represents wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), and the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs and the Office of the Legal Adviser).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

October 3, 1994.